

Appl. No. 09/808,375
Amendment dated September 15, 2004
Reply to Office action of May 17, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1-7, 10-16 and 20 stand rejected, while Claims 8, 9, 17-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-7, and 10-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), while claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Solely for sake of expedition, however, and without admitting to the adequacy of the Examiner's *prima facie* case of unpatentability, Applicants have cancelled claims 1-7, 10-16 and 20. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute these claims in one or more continuation applications.

Claims 8, 9, and 17-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended claim 8, 17 and 19 to introduce the limitations from the independent claims these claims depend upon. Applicants believe the above amendments and remarks overcome the outstanding objections and claims 8, 9, and 17-19 are now in allowable form.

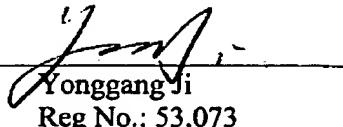
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Applicants believe the foregoing comprises a full and complete response to the office action of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and subsequent allowance of the pending claims is earnestly solicited.

Any questions with respect to the foregoing may be directed to Applicants' undersigned agent at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office via facsimile to number (703) 872-9306 on September 15, 2004.

Signature: 

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